

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 EB-11 SS-20 FEA-02 TRSE-00 CIEP-02

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DRAFTED BY EUR/RPE:JTARRANT

APPROVED BY EUR/RPE:EHPREEG

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T:CJONES

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION OECD PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 059572

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, OECD

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPATION IN WORKING PARTIES OF
OECD HIGH LEVEL OIL GROUP

OECD FOR BENNSKY

1. EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY HUGHES CALLED AT DEPT MARCH 25
ON INSTRUCTIONS TO SAY AUSTRALIA HAD REVERSED ITS POSITION
AND NOW SEEKS OUR ASSISTANCE IN REGAINING MEMBERSHIP ON
OECD HLG WORKING PARTIES CONCERNED WITH OIL SHARING AND
ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT OF CONVENTIONAL ENERGY RESOURCES.

2. HUGHES SAID A RECENT MINISTERIAL-LEVEL MEETING HAD
RE-EXAMINED THE GOA DECISION OF TWO WEEKS AGO TO WITHDRAW
FROM THE OIL SHARING WORKING PARTY AND NOT TO ACCEPT
MEMBERSHIP IN THE NEWLY FORMED WORKING PARTY ON ACCELE-
RATING CONVENTIONAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT. HE EXPLAINED THAT
THE ISSUE OF THEIR PARTICIPATION HAD CAUGHT THEM SOMEWHAT
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BY SURPRISE AND THE NEGATIVE DECISION HAD BEEN MADE TOO

HASTILY IN CANBERRA. ONLY OTHER EXPLANATION OFFERED WAS REFERENCE TO "CERTAIN INTERNAL PROBLEMS." SINCE AUSTRALIA NOW WISHES TO PARTICIPATE IN BOTH GROUPS, HE ASKED THAT THE U.S. TAKE REQUEST SERIOUSLY AND ASSIST IN THEIR EFFORTS. AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR TO OECD WILL PROCEED ON THIS MATTER IN PARIS BUT WILL NOT SEEK TO PUT ISSUE BEFORE WORKING PARTY MEETINGS NOW UNDERWAY. HUGHES MADE

CLEAR AUSTRALIAN INTEREST WAS IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE TWO GROUP'S WORK AND NOT IN BEING MORE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE COORDINATING GROUP.

3. DEPTOFF (TARRANT, EUR/RPE) WAS NON-COMMITTAL IN RESPONSE BUT DID NOTE OUR VIEW ON KEEPING GROUPS SMALL FOR EFFICIENT OPERATION. WE UNDERSTAND AMBASSADOR MAY SEEK APPOINTMENT WITH UNDER SECRETARY DONALDSON TO EMPHASIZE REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE.

4. WE ARE CONSIDERING THIS MATTER AND U.S. REP TO OECD HLG WORKING PARTIES AND EMBASSY CANBERRA ARE REQUESTED NOT TO TAKE ANY ACTION PENDING RECEIPT OF INSTRUCTIONS.
RUSH

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